

Americans came together with courage and unity.

Eight years later, we continue to face great challenges. As a government—and as a nation—we are working to improve our safety and tackle the many difficulties facing us today. The safety of all Americans remains priority No. 1 for everyone in government. We still have troops working hard to protect and defend our Nation. At the same time, we continue to recognize that our diversity is also America's greatest strength. Despite our many differences, in times of need we are always one nation united.

This year, for the first time, 9/11 has been designated a National Day of Service and Remembrance. It is with a heavy heart that I stand on the floor of the Senate today marking this day with a cloak and white roses on the desk of our departed colleague, Senator Ted Kennedy.

Ted worked to designate this day as one of service, and in April the President signed the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act making that goal a reality. Ted would be proud of each and every American who took up that call.

The mission of this new designation is:

[T]o honor the victims of 9/11 and those who rose to service in response to the attacks by encouraging all Americans and others throughout the world to pledge to voluntarily perform at least one good deed, or another service activity on 9/11 each year. In this way we hope to create a lasting and forward-looking legacy—annually rekindling the spirit of service, tolerance, and compassion that unified America and the world in the immediate aftermath of the 9/11 attacks.

I cannot think of a better way to honor the memory of those who were lost than by taking a moment today to remember, and then performing a good deed or act of service.

September 11 is not just a day of national loss but of personal loss. My thoughts and prayers go out to everyone who lost a friend or loved one. Your loss is our loss, and you are forever in our hearts.

Ms. SNOWE. Mr. President, I rise on this most solemn of occasions as our Nation pauses to commemorate the horrific September 11 terrorist attacks that were perpetrated against our country 8 years ago. With utmost reverence for the unimaginable loss experienced on that fateful morning at the World Trade Center, the Pentagon, and in a field near Shanksville, PA, we remember with the heaviest of hearts all of those tragically taken too soon. And in my home State of Maine, we join families who pay tribute to victims they knew and loved—Anna Allison, Carol Flyzik, Robert Jalbert, Jacqueline Norton, Robert Norton, James Roux, Robert Schlegel, and Stephen Ward. Their lives were deplorably cut short, but they will be eternally etched in our memory.

Indeed, this is a heartbreaking anniversary—one of inconsolable sorrow and anguish that recalls vicious and inhuman attacks against our fellow citi-

zens and our nation. But this is also a time when all that may divide us is set aside to focus on everything that unites us as we coalesce together as a single and unconquerable voice against the forces of treachery and terror that sought to destroy us and break our spirit.

We share in the grief borne by those with family and friends who perished in these heinous acts of cowardice, and we join with them in paying homage to their memories and the legacies they leave behind. And we recognize that even the march of time can never fully diminish the litany of emotions we experience as we strive to comprehend how such malice could exist in the world and could be committed so ruthlessly against innocent people.

Yet amid the trials and tribulations that this date in our history evokes, we take solace in the sacred truth that none of us grieves alone, that there are no strangers among us—only Americans.

We recall that, during one of the darkest days in our Nation's extraordinary and storied history, we also witnessed our Nation's mettle and solidarity, the inexhaustible courage and undaunted bravery that provided us with boundless inspiration and hope that sustained us then and inspires us today. And nowhere was that more evident than with the first responders who, in the face of unspeakable adversity and peril, heroically ran toward the very dangers others were desperately trying to escape, placing their lives in harm's way in the most courageous and valiant of endeavors to save others without regard for their own safety.

The noble devotion of the firefighters, police officers, and rescue workers has forever established a selfless example of seemingly ordinary Americans performing extraordinary deeds in the service of others. Those men and women of valor illustrated the lasting and powerful truism that the benevolent forces that seek to uplift humankind will ultimately prevail over those base elements that would conspire to bring it down.

We also honor all who, in the days following September 11, searched for survivors and worked in the devastation at Ground Zero, the Pentagon, and in the wreckage of United flight 93. Many—indeed, far too many—of these fearless responders paid with their own lives or now live with the indelible effects of having worked so closely to the rubble and ruin. They gave their all so that we could heal as a Nation and we will never forget their exceptional contributions.

Their service and sacrifice are also a vivid reminder of the exceptional men and women who have donned our country's uniform to safeguard and defend our Nation. Whether on our shores or soil here at home or around the globe, their steadfast sense of duty and love of country are an inspiration to us all, their commitment fortifies our deter-

mination, and their professionalism steadies our hands in an uncertain world.

Like every American, the details of the morning of September 11, 2001, are powerfully seared in my mind from how it originated with beautiful and clear blue skies to its conclusion with a grief-stricken Nation in mourning and stunned disbelief. I watched the images on the television along with the rest of the world, and later that day as the Sun set over the National Mall—still capped by the billowing smoke from the wound in the side of the Pentagon—I joined my colleagues in the House and Senate on the U.S. Capitol steps in singing, "God Bless America." It was an unmistakable message of unity and one that demonstrated to the country and to the world that we would never be deterred—that our freedoms could never be crushed by the blunt and tortuous instruments of terror that are no match against a resilient people certain in the knowledge that good ultimately triumphs over evil.

The unending pain of loved ones lost does not ease with the passing of years, and yet out of the horrors of these atrocities emerged heroes who were then and will forever be shining testaments to the very best of who we are as a nation. And so, today, we memorialize those whose lives were stilled on September 11, and at the same time, we cannot help but extol the unbounded courage and indomitable spirit exhibited on that day and during the aftermath that continues to be the hallmark of this great land.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

TRANSPORTATION, HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2010

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 3288, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 3288) making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2010, and for other purposes.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Washington.